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REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The power struggle between President Kasavubu and Premier Lumumba remains unresolved and the situation continues fluid. Lumumba, who has maintained his popular support and influence over the police and most army units, retains the initiative. Kasavubu at present appears to have been rebuffed in his bid to oust Lumumba, and several of his closest supporters are in the protective custody of the UN Command in the Congo. However, the President may be gaining significant military support.

On 5 September, Kasavubu announced the removal of Lumumba from office after the President's political organization--the Abako--had put increasing pressure on him to use his constitutional powers to get rid of Lumumba. Several other political groups, generally representative of regional interests opposed to Lumumba's strong central government, joined in this pressure. However, UN troops guarding the radio station failed to prevent Lumumba from broadcasting several appeals for popular support during which he announced Kasavubu's ouster from the presidency.

The UN took over control of Leopoldville's radio station and two airports to prevent the outbreak of disorders. Officially, the UN Command was pursuing a policy of neutrality between rival factions, but to many observers its actions appeared to favor Kasavubu. Lumumba quickly summoned the cabinet and received its support. The cabinet accused Kasavubu of treason for trying to dismiss the premier and took over his functions until the National Assembly could discuss the situation. At the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies--the Senate refused to meet--on 7 September, Lumumba was in control after making a fiery attack on the UN for preventing an armed attack on Katanga. The chamber's resolution decreed that the dismissals of Lumumba and Kasavubu were invalid, and Lumumba remained in the political saddle.

Lumumba's control over the Leopoldville police was indicated by their attack on a pro-Kasavubu demonstration on 6 September during which several of the mob were killed by gunfire. His control over the Congolese National Army--the former Force Publique--is less clear-cut. On 6 September partisans of moderate Jean Bolikango--the Bangala tribal leader from the northwest region of the Congo--among some troops brought in by Lumumba from Thysville liberated him from jail. Lumumba had arrested him on 1 September for allegedly plotting against the government. These troops may strengthen the military position of Kasavubu, who is in alliance

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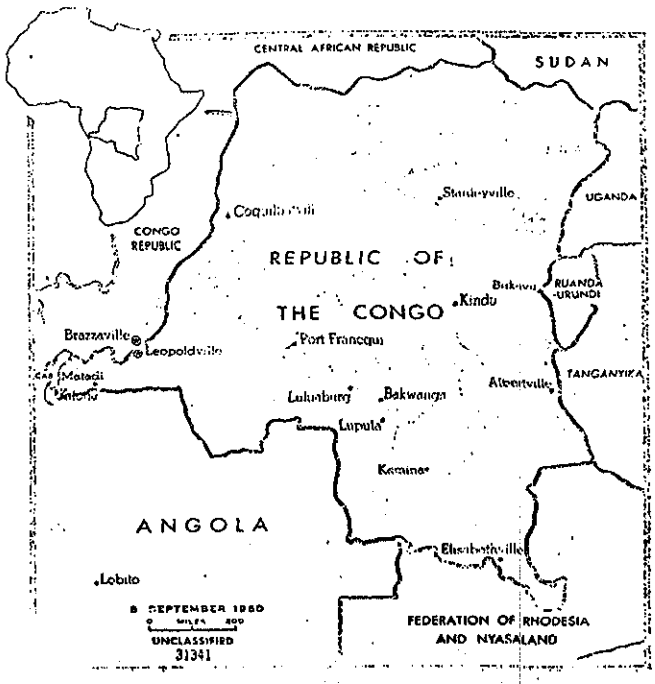
with Bolikango, Kalonji of the Kasai, and Tshombé of Katanga. Support of the Bangalese is vital to the President because, long with Kasavubu's Bakongo people, they dominate the population of Leopoldville and have for years comprised about 40 percent of the former Force Publique.



Many of Kasavubu's supporters within Lumumba's government have sought UN protection against the premier's retaliation. Foreign Minister Bomboko, tipped off by the Congolese chief of staff concerning his impending arrest, appealed to the American ambassador for asylum and then joined President Kasavubu, Senate President Ileo--Kasavubu's candidate for premier--and two other ministers at the President's home under UN protection. This reliance on UN protection, particularly if followed by other Lumumba opponents, will provoke the premier to try drastic measures against UN operations in the Congo. On 8 September he demanded the withdrawal of all UN troops from the Congo.

Soviet and East European propagandists have given strong support to Lumumba in the wake of the attempted coup. Radio Moscow on 7 September criticized UN authorities for "open interference" in the Congo's internal affairs and for "hampering the establishment of law and order," instead of supporting the country's "lawful government." Another Soviet commentary claims that the situation would "undoubtedly right itself quite quickly" if the Belgians, Americans, and other NATO elements would stop their "evil maneuvers."

Such criticisms raise the prospect that the USSR will encourage and support new moves by the Lumumba regime aimed at modifying the role of the UN forces in the Congo. Previously, Soviet officials had suggested to Lumumba that he call for the creation of an observer group comprised of representatives of various African countries which would ensure compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions, but did not press the proposal because of lack of support from African and Asian governments.

Hammarskjold has called for an early meeting of the Security Council in an effort to stop unilateral aid from the outside. He was presumably referring both to Soviet and Belgian actions. He also hopes to secure approval

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for the disarming of the Congolese troops.

The Soviet bloc has been expanding the scope and size of its activities in direct support of the Lumumba regime. There now are well over 200 bloc personnel in the Congo, including high-level economic delegations from the USSR and Czechoslovakia which reportedly are discussing the possibilities of economic aid with Congolese officials. As a result, agreements providing for large-scale bloc economic and technical assistance to the Lumumba government may be announced shortly.

Meanwhile, the central government is continuing its efforts to regain control of secessionist areas in southeastern Congo. Savage but indecisive fighting is occurring between the Congolese Army and forces of the tribal "Mining State" of southeastern Kasai Province centered in the town of Bakwanga. Battles have taken place in several villages, and hundreds of persons--mostly Baluba tribesmen--have been killed. Ten Soviet IL-14 aircraft have airlifted Congolese troops to strengthen Lumumba's force in Kasai. Moscow is, however, unlikely to allow these aircraft, which now bear Congolese markings but have retained their Soviet crews, to become involved in actual fighting.

Other Congolese troop movements indicate that the Lumumba government is planning to move against Katanga secessionists at an early date. Lumumba's forces are reportedly moving toward the northern Katanga border through Kivu Province, but an invasion attempt must await the outcome of the fighting in Kasai.

In Katanga, the government of President Tshombé has had little success in broadening its international base of support. Tshombé's mission to Western Europe received no promises of aid, but nine tons of arms arrived in Elisabethville on 7 September by plane from Belgium. The Belgian commander of the Katanga Air Force hopes that by November he will be able to purchase six armed aircraft and five C47s suitable for paratroop operations. He also plans to add ten pilots to the present total of 15.

Tshombé may be troubled by dissension among the tribes in northern Katanga. Missionaries who recently returned from the area report that there is widespread support for Lumumba, and most of the urban centers are under control of forces opposing Tshombé.

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